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ABSTRACT

Current Office of Education career education program initiatives and ideas in the planning stages are directed to strengthening of leadership, vocational education research grants and exemplary projects, curriculum development and dissemination, and Federal support. Research grant emphasis has been on 12-18 month full-scale career education demonstration projects and the support of a new thrust in vocational education research, applied studies. Commitment of vocational education exemplary projects has been and will continue to be directed toward career preparation-type activities for students in grades kindergarten through post high school, K-14. Three career education curriculum units have been approved for State education agency distribution (Lincoln County, West Virginia and Cobb County, Georgia--K-6; University of California at Los Angeles--allied health careers), and curriculum development has progressed well in 15 career clusters, with grants for three additional clusters this year. For the first time, the Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics, will be oriented to career education with jobs presented in occupational clusters. In terms of budget planning and proposals, career education continues to be viewed as a concept and essential component of the educational process, rather than as a line program or fad. (EA)

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CAREER EDUCATION TRACK RECORD TO DATE*

By
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U.S. Commissioner of Education

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I. INTRODUCTION

Sid Marland is a tough act to follow as Commissioner of Education, particularly in an area such as Career Education. I can think of no other reform movement in education that has been so stimulated by the commitment and advocacy of one man. The Department of Defense recently awarded Dr. Marland its Distinguished Public Service Medal -- the highest award DOD can bestow on a civilian outside of government. In large measure the award was for his leadership in advancing the Career Education concept, especially as it pertains to servicemen and women.

With his departure for greener pastures (the presidency of the College Entrance Examination Board must be financially greener), I have been asked repeatedly, "What happens to Career Education now? Will the Office of Education keep the momentum going?" People want to know if we will continue to provide the kind of leadership and resources committed under Dr. Marland, first as Commissioner and later as Assistant Secretary and they deserve to know.

The answer is an unequivocal yes. Career Education is a major priority, of the Office of Education, of the National Institute of Education, of the Administration. Just last month, in his Education Message to the Congress, the President emphasized again his support for the goals and objectives of Career Education as first expressed in his 1972 State of the Union Message.

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*Presented as part of a panel discussion at 2:30 p.m. on February 25, 1974, at the annual convention of the American Association of School Administrators, Atlantic City, New Jersey.

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True, there are some fiscal constraints in Career Education--as in other program areas. But our planning and program people, working closely with their counterparts in NIE, are exploring every way to get maximum impact from available resources, with the hope that these resources will grow considerably in the next year or two.

So let's go to a progress report on current OE program initiatives and some ideas we have on the drawing board. First a word about administrative changes that should provide more effective leadership at the national level:

II. STRENGTHENING OE LEADERSHIP

A. Reorganization Completed

-- Responsive to mandates of Educational Amendments of 1972

-- Need to coordinate and improve management of priority programs, including Career Education

B. Career Education Leadership

We have convinced a man I consider one of the foremost theorists and proponents of Career Education to lead our planning and program activities for the next year. He is Dr. Kenneth Hoyt from the Univeristy of Maryland. With a distinguished background in guidance and counseling, Ken is also a creative innovator who has assisted a number of States in developing and clarifying their own Career Education goals and strategies. He has been both supporter and friendly critic of OE's Career Education effort over the last three

years. We have now invited him into the kitchen to do some of the cooking--and take some of the heat.

As an Associate Commissioner and director of the Office of Career Education in Bill Pierce's Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education, Ken will be responsible for developing and consolidating all Career Education conceptualization, policy formulation, and program activity throughout the Office of Education. I'm sure you will find him responsive to your interests and concerns, a technical advisor of high order, and a man who cares deeply about generating real reform and revitalization of American education.

III. ON-GOING INITIATIVES

A. Research Grants (Part C-VEA)

Emphasis has been on 12-18 month full-scale Career Education demonstration projects. Many of these are now well established and have provided much of the implementation and evaluation data required of such projects; and while OE support has been phased out, they continue under State or local sponsorship.

In fiscal 1974 OE is using Part C funds to support a new thrust in vocational education research--Applied Studies. These seem certain to provide spinoffs of considerable value to the Career Education effort. We asked States and local education agencies for proposals in five categories: 1) vocational and curriculum studies, 2) improved vocational

programs for disadvantaged, handicapped, and minority students, 3) alternative work experience programs, 4) guidance, counseling, placement, and student followup services, and 5) manpower (job market) information.

By the January 4 deadline we had received 313 project applications, With $8 million allocated proportionately to States we can support some 70 projects with at least one, and often more, in each State or territory.

B. Exemplary Projects (Part D-VEA)

The $8 million discretionary portion of the Vocational Education Act currently supports 52 projects, all directly involving local schools and students. These projects, most funded through FY '75, are the second group of three-year projects supported under the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968.

In addition, we estimate that States use $4 to $5 million of the $8 million total they receive in Part D formula grants on Career Education activities.

The Vocational Amendments specifically state that Part D funds are to be used for occupational orientation in the elementary years, exploratory occupational experiences for junior high students, and work experiences and other forms of job preparation at the high school and community college levels. Thus, we are committed by law to support career preparation-type activities for students in grades K-14. We plan to continue that effort.

C. Curriculum Development and Dissemination

You have asked repeatedly for Career Education curriculum units, developed and tested under OE auspices and quality-control, for use by teachers and students. I am happy to report that the first units are now available and a few more will be in the next several months. Here are some examples of these efforts:

1) Distillation of Best Locally Developed Materials

Last spring we set up rigid criteria by which an outside contractor could evaluate curriculum units developed by individual schools or districts for replication and distribution through State education agencies to other interested schools and districts. The contractor surveyed 800 units and found 100 to be of high quality. So exacting (of necessity) were our standards that only 11 programs so far have even been seriously considered for national distribution. Of these, three have been approved by OE's Dissemination Review Panel for distribution this spring, the first two developed by the Exemplary Projects program (Part D-VEA), the third as a Part C research projects.

-- K-6 Curriculum Guide, Lincoln County, W. Va.

-- K-6 Curriculum Units, Cobb County, Ga.

-- Introduction to Allied Health Careers, University of California at Los Angeles

2) OE Curriculum Development Program

Curriculum development (Part I-VEA) is well along in 10 of the 15 career clusters, including public service, construction, manufacturing, and "agribusiness."

Grants will be awarded for three additional clusters this year. Many units are being tested in schools this year. The public service materials are available now. Consumer education will be ready this summer. Here are three units (HOLD UP BOOKS) now available from the Government Printing Office:

-- Computers and Career, Grades 9-12, developed by Central Texas College for the Business and Office cluster.

-- Data Processing Technology 2-Year Post High School Curriculum, also developed by Central Texas College for the Business and Office cluster.

-- Career Exploration in the Fashion Industry, Grades 7-9, developed by the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York Basically this is in the Manufacturing and the Marketing and Distribution clusters.

Of course, each cluster will have units on many other careers and for other grade levels.

D. BLS OFFERS Career-Oriented Handbook

Federal agencies do sometimes talk to each other--and even coordinate their activities. This year, for the first time, the Occupational Outlook Handbook of the Bureau of Labor Statistics will be o

toward Career Education. Hundreds of jobs will be presented in 13 occupational clusters, based on OE's cluster concept. In previous editions, jobs were arranged by educational skill or socioeconomic level. Each job is now being classified by 25 characteristics to help readers match personal traits and skills with the nature of the job. A comparison of earnings among various careers is also being developed. The Handbook will be off the press this spring.

E. FICE Subcommittee on Career Education

Activities related to education across many agencies are coordinated by the Federal Interagency Committee on Education. Its subcommittee on Career Education, chaired by Bill Pierce, coordinates Career Education efforts among member agencies. Last summer, for example, the subcommittee performed an exploratory study on curriculum materials developed within the agencies in just two priority areas: allied health occupations and the marine sciences. In seven agencies 90 such curriculum-related projects were found; and while there was a good deal less duplication involved than the gross figures might indicate -- for many of the projects were very narrowly targeted--the study persuaded us beyond any doubt of the benefits to be reaped through serious effort in interagency coordination. We are certain this effort can make us of what we have, avoid unwarranted duplication, and more clearly focus resources for the future.

IV. UPCOMING OE INITIATIVES

While we were disappointed at not getting the new money we requested for FY '74 for a special dissemination and demonstration effort, we should not lose sight of the fact that Career Education remains a concept--rather than a line program like the Teacher Corps. It continues to be advanced under a number of legislative authorities, including the Cooperative Research Act, the Vocational Education Act, and the Education Professions Development Act. Under a system of forward funding, most of the activities represented in FY 1973 funding are, in fact, taking place now--during the 1973-74 school year.

The new 1975 HEW budget request provides $10 million, again specifically for Career Education demonstration and developmental assistance activities. These are to be coordinated with other Career Education activities of the Office of Education, and with the Career Education effort conducted by the National Institute of Education.

Meantime, with no new money for the Fiscal 1974 period, we have time to step back and look at where we are and where we need to go. We are calling 1974 a "diagnostic year." This means we are devoting some very necessary time to clarifying what we mean by Career Education, planning a systematic survey of what is going on at State and local levels, and gearing up to give you better technical assistance in implementing your own programs.

We hope to develop a series of regional and national conferences much like the 16 regional conferences held in 1972, and the national conference

held last year to address minority concerns about Career Education. We need the broadest possible input, from industry, labor, civic and ethnic groups, parents and students, as well as the full spectrum of the educational community, from liberal arts to industrial arts educators. Together we need to reach some consensus on what society and individuals expect of our schools and how schools can use Career Education as one element among many to meet those expectations.

V. CONCLUSION

I am convinced that the spark ignited by Sid Marland and many of his colleagues, in Government and out, is now generating its own momentum in States, colleges, and local communities. Career Education is going to make it, with or without Federal support. The need for a closer relationship between education and the world we live in, as workers, as social beings, as individuals seeking personal fulfillment, is too clear to too many people to chalk Career Education up as just another fad.

I am confident there will be Federal support as long as it is needed. I will do everything I can to make that support viable, productive, cost-effective, and, most of all, student-effective. At the beginning of every budget cycle, every planning period, every conference and workshop and ad hoc session, we need to remember that we are planning, budgeting, and learning toward a single goal: To improve the educational product we offer America's 60 million school and college students. Career Education, in my view, is now an essential component of that process.